

JAMMAL Herald

Summer, 2009 Volume 16 Number 3

Rare Spring Blizzard Hits Jamal Place!



Temika Peace organizes documents for Medicaid audit

In mid-April a surprising blizzard caught Jamal Place off-guard. The blizzard wasn't one of precipitation but of trepidation when the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services sent a memo stating that all Medicaid certified child welfare agencies in the state would need to review all Medicaid documents for technical accuracy since the 2009 fiscal year began. The agency's "blizzard" was comprised of over 23,000 service notes reflecting the treatment of 16 group home youth from July, 1 2008 through April 30, 2009. Five staff members, Ann Deuel, Brian Barclay, Carin Moody, Clarissa Christian and Deborah Tate

spent over 235 hours reviewing treatment documents to ensure that Medicaid technical compliance standards were met. Only notes meeting the requirements are billed to Medicaid.

The review raised questions about the speciousness of the Medicaid requirements. The Jamal Place agency review found sound narratives addressing individual treatment issues with each youth reviewed. However, if a note missed the notation of a staff member's Medicaid credential, or failed to indicate where the treatment occurred on-site or off-site, then that note could be determined by a Medicaid

auditor to be invalid. It would not matter if the content of the note indicated comprehensive treatment, if a technical aspect is missing, the note is not billable.

Another concern agency reviewers found was the random subjectivity of a reviewer's interpretation of a treatment note. For example, in the training preparing agencies for their internal review, the instructor noted that "praising a client on their progress" was not an allowable treatment intervention, but "encouraging" a youth seemed acceptable. The semantical parsing of words can and will create future

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Christian Totty and Allen Yang plan "Project Green" activities

Jamal Place Going Green

Jamal Place is participating in a "green" project with two other private agencies. Allen Yang, of Objective Arts Technology Consulting and Christian Totty, the administrative assistant of Jamal Place have teamed together to coordinate green project activities within the group home and the transitional living program.

Mr. Yang and Ms. Totty will mentor youth at each program site about environmental impacts and ways that the kids and the staff members can save energy and money by reducing waste within the agency.

The residents will establish

benchmarks of energy use and energy waste in each program from investigations they conduct with their peers. Then the residents will develop a list of recommended activities to reduce energy costs and cut down on waste. Once the recommendations are made, the activities will be implemented and monitored over a month long period. When the results are in, Mr. Yang and Ms. Totty will determine how much money the agency could save in a year as a result of the green activities. The savings the agency realizes will be divided in half. Half of the savings will support an activity for the residents and the other half will go into the agency's

general operating fund.

The initial goal of the green project is to see a 10% reduction in energy usage and waste production while realizing a minimum 10% increase in cost savings. When the project is complete the residents and their mentors will publish their findings and repeat the process with three new agencies. Pilot results will be shared in a future newsletter.

Jamal Place is pleased to be selected for this pilot project and looks forward to conserving energy, reducing waste and saving money within the agency!

Inside This Issue:

- Letter from the Director
- Celebrate 14 Years With Jamal Place
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- COA Re-Accreditation Begins!

Letter from the Director

June, 2009



Ann Deuel, Executive Director, Jamal Place, Inc.

Dear Friends,

We are rapidly approaching the end of FY '09. It has been quite a year of challenges—but also of celebration.

This past year three young men from the TLP emancipated from state care. All three received their high school diplomas, two are working and one is also in college. Three other young men have graduated from our program into independent living. Of these three, all are high school graduates, two are enrolled in college and one is employed. The DeAngelis house staff members and the agency's after care coordinator are keeping tabs on all of the boys to make sure that their "launch" into adulthood is as successful as we can possibly make it.

During FY '09 the Jamal Place Group Home returned one boy to his mother's care, returned another youth to his former foster home placement and sent two boys into the least restrictive placement of transitional living care. One boy is graduating from eighth grade and preparing for high school. This year the group home served 18 boys which is the greatest number of youth we have ever served in one fiscal year.

We are ending the first year of performance based contracting with the state. Performance based contracting has caused us to look critically at our programs and the treatment services we provide to the more psychiatrically complex youth who are now being referred to our programs. We have analyzed

and are implementing the changes we need to make internally—adjusting our behavior modification programs, increasing substance abuse services and enhancing our recreational and cultural activity programming.

We have been in conversation with DCFS about the external factors which have had an impact on our agency's performance. This year we have been confounded by the pace of the Chicago Public Schools to appropriately refer and place our kids into special education services. We have also dealt with problems related to the operation of drug houses located near our buildings and near the high school the group home boys attend. Equally frustrating is the "point system" law enforcement uses to detain youth who are arrested for serious crimes. We have had some minors behave in a most egregious and dangerous manner—yet the deterrent of detention is out of reach because the youth have not "earned" enough points to be detained. This is concerning because it empowers youth to continue dangerous behaviors and gives them a false sense of "getting over" on the system. The reality comes when they reach the magical age of 17 and are suddenly sitting in Cook County Jail. We believe that earlier juvenile intervention is preferable to adult correctional intervention. We will continue our conversation with DCFS and also with the governor and state legislators about issues which are negatively impacting our youth.

The end of FY 2009 is rapidly approaching. I hope you will

join us in our 14th Annual Anniversary Picnic and Walkathon on June 27, 2009 in Douglas Park. The walkathon is our last fundraising event of this fiscal year and I hope you will join one of the agency's team to help us reach our goal of raising \$24,000 to end the year on a positive financial note. You would be surprised how five and ten dollar contributions add up! There is a walkathon pledge sheet printed in this newsletter for your convenience. Bring your own team, pray for a sunny day, wear good walking shoes and prepare to enjoy good food, conversation and competitive games!

As always, I thank you for supporting Jamal Place. On July 1, 2009 we begin our march into our 15th year of operation. It seems like just yesterday when ten little boys ran into our home and chose which bedroom they would be sleeping in. Now, with over 100 residents served, our walls have many success stories to tell. You have made those successes possible—we are most grateful.

Have a safe and peaceful summer!

Sincerely,

Ann G. Deuel
Executive Director

Celebrate 14 Years with Jamal Place

Won't you join the Jamal Place family as we celebrate 14 years of providing group home and transitional living services to boys and young men in the North Lawndale community? Won't you help us raise much needed funds when we walk and picnic in Douglas Park on Saturday, June 27, 2009? Our celebration kicks off at 9:30 a.m. with the registration for our annual 5K walkathon.

The walk is our last fundraiser of FY 2009 and it remains particularly important this year as child welfare agencies across the state face the eighth year of the past ten years with no cost of doing business increase to state contracts. These are tough economic times.

Everyone is feeling the pinch of the current recession—Jamal Place is no exception. You can help Jamal Place end the fiscal year on a positive note by joining one of our walkathon teams. Join the green team if you like being part of a first place team that consistently raises the most money for the organization. Or, throw your support behind the red team which (like Avis) tried harder last year and came in second place. With your help the purple team could “charm” last year's third place into this year's first place spot—or you can give courage to last year's last place yellow team with your participation and donation. If you believe in our work, please join us on June 27th in beautiful

Douglas Park. Find your gym shoes. Bring your friends. Plan on spending a great day with old and new friends.

A walk registration form is provided in this newsletter. Gather your friends and make the 14th anniversary of Jamal Place a team event. With your support (and our year long expense cutting activities) we hope to end this fiscal year in the black. If you can't walk, plan to spend a beautiful summer day with Jamal Place—the picnic begins after the walk at 11:00 a.m. Make a commitment to join the Jamal Place organization as we celebrate our boys and our work!

Do You Know These People?

Green Team

Ann Deuel
Ron Fernandez
Rick Ricketts
Danny Bowler
Sam Betts
Ida Gray
Katrina Lawrence
James Webster
Robert Griffin
Jody Bierzychudek
Temika Peace
Deborah Tate

Red Team

Rhiannon Lees
Sandra Gorney
Nicole Lucido
Erin Bowler
Nicole Arnold
John Holiman
Letrissia Smith
Bobby Vasquez
David Wolfe
Mary Arnold
Randy Borage
Tim Packer

Purple Team

Carin Moody
Thomas Anderson
Toni Luke
Monica Amu
Patrick Harris
Falisha Hunter
Odie Payne
Cindy Solorzano
Vida Lozano-Alvaredo
Clarissa Christian
Eddie Vega
Kameron Johnson

Yellow Team

Brian Barclay
Julie Augustyn
Melanie Pettway
Thomas Frayne
Megan Brady
Margaret Haranczyk
Monique Lawrence
Quincy Shelby
Christian Totty
Rhea Wolbrink
April Smith
Shelby Thurmond

Support your friend, family member or colleague by raising funds for Jamal Place. Show them you care! The board members and staff members who comprise the 14th Annual Walkathon Teams need your help and participation. It's easy—take the pledge sheet (on the opposite page) to work, to school or to any gathering of family or friends. Jump on the phone—send out e-mails. Create your own team! No donation is too small (or too large) to help support the work of Jamal Place, Inc! You can bring the donations the day of the picnic or mail the donations to: Jamal Place, Inc. c/o 1137 W. Taylor Street, #163, Chicago, IL 60607.



Performers engage audience at the House of Blues



Talib Kweli performs at the Dare 2 Dream Benefit Concert

Rhyme & Reason:

Jamal Place, Inc. Youth Attend Dare to Dream Benefit Concert By Christian Totty

On May 2, 2009 the **House of Blues** was filled to the brim with enthusiastic Hip-Hop fans patiently waiting to hear the stellar emcee, *Talib Kweli*. *Kweli*, a Brooklyn native and son of two professors, was the featured performer for **Dare 2 Dream**, a concert presented by **Platform One Entertainment** to benefit non-profit organizations that work towards bringing public attention to children's literacy in the Chicago Public Schools. In his own words Kweli states, "I am honored and blessed to be performing for Dare 2 Dream. It is causes like this that inspire the fabric of my work." Since the debut of *Reflection Eternal* in 2000, *Kweli* has made it a point to encourage positive leadership within the Hip-Hop community, and his consistent devotion to education and activism has become his signature trademark.

Thanks to a generous donation from Ms. Lynn Besser, TLP and Group Home youth and staff members joined this lively multigenerational, multi-cultural crowd to participate in the benefit's festivities. Eyes and ears were captivated as the talented opening acts, *THE PRIMEMERIDIAN*, and Swamphouse roused the audience. Three hours of non-stop music left everyone feeling energized and inspired. Youth reflections on the evening, were positive. Amun said, "It was phenomenal". Carlus thought the concert was, "Great", then added, "No, it was awesome!" Phillip, an avid fan of *Kweli* for some time, said, "It was exciting, and powerful", while Juarez

considered the evening to be, "Spectacular!"

An event like this is a vital opportunity for Jamal Place staff, and youth to come together. We are grateful to Ms. Besser for graciously requesting that we use her donation towards a cultural event that would instill a sense of value and pride in our young men's lives. Her gift allowed us to show the residents that the art of Hip-Hop can be used for positive expression and is a tour de force. The message the boys received was that much like Hip-Hop; they too have the ability to be extraordinary.

For more information, go to:

Platform One Entertainment: <http://www.platform-1.com/home.php>

Dare 2 Dream official site: http://www.platform1.com/events_dare_to_dream.php

Talib Kweli's official site: <http://www.talibkweli.com/>

Jamal Place, Inc.

14th Annual Anniversary Picnic and Walkathon

Who: YOU!	Where: Picnic Begins Immediately Following the Walk Beautiful Douglas Park (Across from 1335 S. California Avenue, Chicago, IL 60608)	How: Sign up individually or get a team together! T-Shirts provided at the event for contributors donating \$30 or more toward the walkathon. T-Shirt Sizes and contributions must be received by 6/11/09 for processing
What: Participate In the Jamal Place, Inc. 14th Anniversary Picnic and 5K Walkathon	Why: To support a great organization helping boys and young men have a chance at success!	
When: Saturday, June 27, 2009 Registration: 9:30 a.m. Walk: 10:00 a.m.		

Team: _____ Co-Captian: _____ Co-Captian: _____

Name	Address	Amount Pledged	Attending Walkathon? Indicate Yes or No	Adult T-Shirt Size \$30 minimum pledge for T-shirt required S M XL 2XL 3XL

Contributions may be made to Jamal Place, Inc. and are tax deductible as allowed by law. Donations may be mailed to:

Jamal Place, Inc., c/o 1137 W. Taylor St., #163, Chicago, IL 60607

All contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law. A traveling trophy will be awarded each year to the team raising the most money and to the team with the greatest number of participants!

Rare Spring Blizzard Hits Jamal Place!

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Deborah Tate and Carin Moody review Medicaid notes

auditing problems for agencies providing quality service to kids. Moreover, note and assessment requirements have changed during the course of the year without adequate communication to agencies to adopt those changes into procedures, trainings and forms.

The state of Illinois recoups a portion of the daily rate paid to agencies to care for the state's children from the federal government. That would be the Medicaid portion of the daily rate Jamal Place receives to provide care. Medicaid monies help the state and should help enhance agency rates so the best service can be provided. The baselessness of some of the documentation requirements and the subjectivity implicit in note

reviews is putting an undue burden on child welfare agencies across the state.

Jamal Place has requested a meeting with Illinois Senator Dick Durbin's staff to discuss the following to help agencies meet the intent of the Medicaid service provisions:

- The need for all agencies in Illinois to have access to and funding for computerized Medicaid case management systems
- The need for documentation requirements to be clear, meaningful and static.
- The need to align DCFS licensing , performance based contracting, and residential monitoring activities with agency accreditation reviews and internal quality improvement processes as a way to assure the federal government that needed and contracted services are being provided.

Jamal Place will be joined in the discussion with Senator Durbin's staff by the CEO's and executive staff from Lawrence Hall Youth Services, Lydia Home Association, Maryville Academy and Hephzibah Children's Association.

COA Re-Accreditation Begins!

The purpose of COA accreditation is to ensure that Jamal Place recognizes and is meeting nationally accepted standards of best practice in the provision of child welfare services. A dozen areas will be reviewed as Jamal Place, Inc.'s begins its year long re-accreditation self-study in July, 2009. The agency' re-accreditation activities will include an in-depth review of the following standards:

- Administration and Service Environment
- Behavior Management Services
- Client Rights

- Ethical Practices
- Financial Management
- Governance
- Group Living Standards
- Human Resources
- Quality Improvement
- Risk Management
- Training and Supervision
- Youth Independent Living Services.

As the agency reviews each standard, Jamal Place, Inc. must make sure that the agency provides the most current standards of care and best practice. The agency, group home and transitional living program will provide narrative summaries, policies,

tables charts and resident outcome evidence to support the agency's work on behalf of the boys and young men served by the agency.

FY 2010 will be an intensive year of agency reflection and review. Jamal Place has been accredited since October 1998. This review will mark the agency's third re-accreditation cycle. Each time Jamal Place goes through the process, the agency and its programs have emerged stronger and better able to serve youth in need of care.

Jamal Place would like to thank the following individuals, businesses and foundations for their kind support. List reflects donations received through 5/18/09.

FY 2009 Charitable Donations (July 1, 2008–June 30, 2009)

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 Ann Deuel

In Memory of Rose Kingsley
 The family and friends of
 Rose Kingsley

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 Deuel"*
 Ann Deuel

In Honor of Peg Bala
 Grant and Joyce Strombeck

In Honor of Sue Drafts
 Grant and Joyce Strombeck

*In Honor of Delia and Garrett
 Wong*
 Grant and Joyce Strombeck

*In Honor of Mark and Carol
 Anderson*
 George and Beth Drost

*In Honor of Rudolf and Lynn
 Drost*
 George and Beth Drost

In Honor of Lauren Greenwood
 Mark and Cindy Greenwood

*In Honor of Joanna
 Greenwood*
 Mark and Cindy Greenwood

*In Honor of Melissa
 Greenwood*
 Mark and Cindy Greenwood

In-Kind Donations:

Larissa Akrawi
Kitchen Supplies
 Len and Julie Augustyn
*Television/Computer Printers
 and Paper*
 Constance Hudson
School Supplies
 The Korenchen Family
*Christmas Gifts for the Group
 Home Boys*
 Robyn Michaels
*Artwork/Books and
 Magazines*



Save the Date!

Saturday, June 27, 2009
9:30-5:00 p.m.

14th Annual Anniversary
Picnic and Walkathon
Douglas Park, Chicago

Saturday, October 3, 2009
6:30-10:30 p.m.

14th Annual Benefit
Reception and Auction
River East Art Center—
North Pier, Chicago

Thursday, November
19, 2009

6:30-8:30 p.m.
Agency Thanksgiving Dinner
DeAngelis House Transitional
Living Program

Saturday, December 12,
2009

1:00-5:00 p.m.
15th Annual Tree Trimming
Part— Jamal Place Group
Home

Monday, March 1, 2010
Spring Fundraising Appeal

Saturday, June 26, 2010
9:30-5:00 p.m.

15th Annual Anniversary
Picnic and Walkathon
Douglas Park

Jamal Place, Inc.

Incorporated; July 1993

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Ann Deuel

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